

**Michael Coleman
Mayor of Columbus, Ohio**

National Conference of Democratic Mayors

Remarks at the 2004 Democratic National Convention

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I'm Mike Coleman, Mayor of America's 21st century City Columbus, Ohio.

From the shore of Lake Erie to the banks of the Ohio River, the great state of Ohio stands squarely in the heartland of America. And in the middle of Ohio is the great City of Columbus, the largest City in the state.

I call Columbus "America's 21st Century City," because our best days are still ahead. Columbus remains strong in the face of Ohio's loss of over 200 thousand jobs.

Columbus remains strong because we bring people together to get things done, no matter where you grew up, where you go to church, where you work, how you vote or how much money you make. But that is not true everywhere. We have seen signs of the growing ideological polarization and in the widening gap. Ohio is falling behind and America is divided, suffering from a lack of unity, leadership and vision.

Like Columbus, America's best days are still ahead if we can bring people together as one nation under God indivisible.

America's best days are ahead if we elect leaders who bring us together to address the challenges of the 21st century: homeland security and economic security.

Homeland security means hometown security. Cities and towns across the country are on the frontlines of national defense, the frontlines in the global war on terrorism a line drawn on the Main Streets in every hometown. Safety and security are not abstract ideas. They are the most basic services provided in America just ask any police officer, any firefighter.

No leader should stand before the American people and say, "I'll protect you," while they cut millions of dollars in funding for police officers. No leader can claim to be defending America, while opening the door for a flood of automatic weapons on our streets by allowing the assault weapons ban to expire.

America's best days are still ahead. When we can trust that our leaders understand that hometown security also means economic security for families.

John Kerry is a leader I trust. I trust him to tell me the truth. A trust of the highest order. I trust him to help keep us secure from terrorism and give us a chance for economic success at home.

John Kerry has a plan that expands opportunity to everyone in cities and rural America alike. John Kerry will end tax breaks for companies that move jobs overseas.

He will enforce our trade laws and reward companies that create jobs in America. He will stand up for Columbus and every city, where so many jobs are created and continue to help us invest in the future.

John Kerry has the faith, the optimism, and the sense of personal responsibility it takes to reunite this country. He believes that we can do anything, conquer any challenge, achieve any goal, no matter the difficulty if we only work together to fight joblessness, hopelessness and helplessness.

I proudly second the nomination of Senator John Kerry as the next president of the United States of America.

I am also proud to know Senator John Edwards. These are two men who I have welcomed to my city, worshipped with in Columbus churches, walked through our neighborhoods, so that they could see the spirit of Columbus.

I do not take this responsibility lightly, because tonight I dedicate this nomination to the many sons and daughter serving in the United States Armed Forces. Whether serving here at home, overseas, in Iraq or in Afghanistan.

I dedicate this nomination to my son, Lance Corporal John David Coleman a United States Marine training in Israel today.

John Kerry I trust you to lead him, as he performs his duty and I pray that one day we can bring all of America's daughters and sons home safe and sound to a better America, a United America.

God bless you and God bless America.